

ALL AT IT
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A SERMON
DELIVERED ON LORD'S DAY MORNING, SEPTEMBER 16, 1888,
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

“Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word. Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them.”
Acts 8:4, 5.

“Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.”
Acts 8:35.

“THEY that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the Word.” God intended that His church should be scattered over the world. There was a tendency in our humanity at first to remain together; hence the first grey fathers endeavored to build a central tower, around which the race should rally. But God confounded their language, and scattered them from Babel, that they might people all the world. Jerusalem was at first the central point of Christianity. The church there was highly favored with its twelve apostles and a multitude of minor lights, and the tendency would have been to keep the center strong. I have often heard the argument, “Do not have too many out-stations, keep up a strong central force.” But God’s plan was that the holy force should be distributed; the holy seed must be sown. To do this the Lord made use of the rough hand of persecution. The disciples could not stay in Jerusalem, Saul made them run for their lives, or, if they did not, he shut them up in prison, and prisons in those days were as foul and noisome as to be the vestibules of the grave. One went this way, and one went the other way, and the faithful were scattered.

In every church where there is really the power of the Spirit of God, the Lord will cause it to be spread abroad, more or less. He never means that a church should be like a nut shut up in a shell, nor like ointment enclosed in a box. The precious perfume of the gospel must be poured forth to sweeten the air. Just now we have little of that form of persecution which drives men from home. But godly people are scattered through the necessity of earning a livelihood. Sometimes we regret that certain young men should have to go a distance, but should we regret it? We lament that certain families must migrate to the colonies. Does not the Lord by this means sow the good seed widely? It is very pleasant to be comfortably settled under an edifying ministry, but the Lord has need of some of His servants in places where there is no light. In many ways the great Head of the church scatters His servants abroad, but they ought of themselves to scatter voluntarily. Every Christian should say, “Where can I do the most good?” and if he can do more good anywhere beneath the sun than in the land of his birth, he is bound to go there, if he can. God will have us scattered, and if we will not go afield willingly, He may use providential necessity as the forcible means of our dispersion.

The Lord’s design is not the scattering in itself, but scattering for a purpose. He intended that, being scattered, the saints of Jerusalem should go everywhere preaching the word. Upon this I am going to speak at this time.

I would call your attention to the translation in the Revised Version, where Philip is said to have “proclaimed” the word. The word “proclaim” is not quite so subject to the modern sense which has spoiled the word “preach.” “Preach” has come to be a sort of official term for delivering a set discourse, whereas gospel preaching is talking, discoursing, and telling out the gospel in any way. We are to make known the word of the Lord.

I. In handling my subject, I shall call your attention, first, to THE UNIVERSALITY OR THE WORK OF EVANGELIZING—of course I mean its universality among believers. “They that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word.” They; that is, all the scattered. There does not

appear to have been any exception. You thought it would have read, “Then the apostles went everywhere preaching the word.” They were just the people who did not go at all, for the twelve remained at headquarters as yet, but the rest went everywhere preaching the word. Generals may have to stand still in the center of the battle to direct the forces, but in this battle all the common soldiers marched to the fight. This was to be a soldiers’ battle, and of that sort all the battles of the cross ought to be.

Observe then, first, that in this *there were no professional distinctions*. It is not said that the ministers, being scattered abroad, went everywhere proclaiming the word, but the whole of the scattered. Scarcely anything has been more injurious to the kingdom of Christ than the distinction between clergy and laity. No such distinction was ever laid down by the Spirit of God. “You are God’s *kleros*”; all God’s saints are God’s inheritance, and we should regard ourselves as such. “You are a royal priesthood.” “He has made us unto our God kings and priests.” As in heaven there is no temple because it is all temple, so in the church of God there is no priesthood because it is all priesthood.

We have among ourselves a distinction between ministers and others. But you are all to minister. There are many ministries of one form and another, and though God gives to His church apostles, teachers, pastors, evangelists, and the like, yet not by way of setting up a professional caste of men, who are to do the work for God while others sit still. I have before used the following parable—In olden times a certain host had conquered wherever they went forward in one mass. But it came to pass that they thought themselves so exceeding strong that they said, “Let not every man go to war. Let us choose a few, and make this few into a select standing army.” They picked out their champions, and sent them to the war. These continued the conflict with difficulty; many of them fell in the fight. No provinces were added to the kingdom, and things were at a standstill. They had followed a fatal policy. The true method was for the whole of them to march to battle. This is the true and only policy of Christianity—all Christians soldiers of the cross, and all on active service. Every converted man is to teach what he knows; all those who have drunk of the living water are to become fountains out of which shall flow rivers of living water. We shall never get back to the grand old times of conquest until we get back to the old method of “all at it.” In proportion as we come, in any one church, to individual service; nobody dreaming of doing his work by deputy, but each one serving God for himself; in that proportion, under the blessing of God, we shall come back to the old success.

Observe, next, that *there were no professional exceptions*. Philip is mentioned as going down to Samaria to preach, but Philip was originally set apart to attend to the distribution of the alms of the church. It is good for every man to attend to his own special office, but where that office ceases to be needful, let him get to that work which is common and constant. The time had come when there was no need for the deacon to sit in the vestry, for the poor people were all scattered. What does the deacon do? As the work to which he was appointed has come to an end, he keeps to the work for which every Christian is appointed, and he proclaims the gospel of Jesus Christ. No one of us, then, can be exempted from the work of spreading the gospel because we are engaged in some other work. Good as it is, though it may be very intimately connected with the kingdom of Christ, yet it does not exonerate us from the work of endeavoring to bring sinners to Christ in some way or other. Stephen, the deacon, began first to bear testimony, and when he died, Philip, the next on the roll, stepped into his place. One soldier falls, and another steps forward. All are to proclaim the word, and no one is exempted by another form of service. Oh, that the Lord’s people everywhere would note this!

Observe that there were *no educational or literary exceptions*. It is thought nowadays that a man must not try to proclaim the gospel, unless he has had a good education. To try and preach Christ and yet to commit grammatical blunders is looked upon as a grave offense. People are mightily offended at the idea of the gospel being properly preached by an uneducated man. This I believe to be a very injurious mistake. There is nothing whatsoever in the whole compass of Scripture to excuse any mouth from speaking for Jesus when the heart is really acquainted with His salvation. We are not all called to “preach,” in the new sense of the term, but we are all called to make Jesus known if we know Him. Has the gospel ever been spread to any extent by men of high literary power? Look through the whole line of history, and see if it is so. Have the men of splendid eloquence been remarkable for winning souls? I could quote names that stand first in the roll of oratory, which are low down in the roll of soul-winners. Those whom God has most honored have been men who, whatever their gifts, have consecrated them-

selves to God, and have earnestly declared the great truths of God's Word. Men who have been terribly in earnest, and have faithfully described man's ruin by sin, and God's remedy of grace—men who have warned sinners to escape from the wrath to come by believing in the Lord Jesus—these have been useful. If they had great gifts, they were no detriment to them; if they had few talents, this did not disqualify them. It has pleased God to use the base things of this world, and things that are despised, for the accomplishment of His great purposes of love. Paul declared that he proclaimed the gospel, “not with wisdom of words.” He feared what might happen if he used worldly rhetoric, and therefore he refused the wisdom of words. We have need to do so now with emphasis. Let us trust in the divine energy of the Holy Spirit, and speak the truth in reliance upon His might, whether we can speak fluently with Apollos, or are slow of speech, like Moses. I say, then, to you, my dear friend, who unhappily may be lacking in education, do not therefore stop your testimony to our Lord. Rescue the perishing. What if you are not a great theologian? If you understand the plan of salvation you are sufficiently instructed to be a good witness for your Lord. Oh, that the Holy Spirit may make you such! A blacksmith can shoe a horse, though he has never studied astronomy. He might be none the worse smith if he were familiar with the stars, but I fail to see that he would be much the better as a smith. Warn men to escape from the wrath to come, and believe in Jesus, and you can do this just as well though no science has puzzled you.

As there were no exceptions on account of educational defects, so were there *no exclusions on account of sex*. Men and women were to spread abroad the knowledge of Jesus. We read that, “As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men *and women* committing them to prison. Therefore they that were scattered abroad” (and these must have been men *and woman*) “went everywhere preaching the word.” There are many ways in which women can fittingly proclaim the word of the Lord, and in some of these they can proclaim it more efficiently than men. There are minds that will be attracted by the tender, plaintive, winning manner in which the sister in Christ expresses herself. A Christian mother! What a minister is she to her family! A Christian woman in single life—in the family circle, or even in domestic service—what may she not accomplish, if her heart is warm with love to her Savior! We cannot say to the women, “Go home, there is nothing for *you* to do in the service of the Lord.” Far from it, we entreat Martha and Mary, Lydia and Dorcas, and all the elect sisterhood, young and old, rich and poor, to instruct others as God instructs them. Young men and maidens, old men and matrons, yes, and boys and girls who love the Lord, should speak well of Jesus, and make known His salvation from day to day.

You see, dear friends, how the Lord gave to all His people the holy work of making Jesus known to men. How well they carried it out! Within a hundred years after the death of our Lord, His name had been made known to all the known world. But I do not know how many years it will take to make Christ known at the rate of our present movement. A few men are set apart for missionaries, and directed with complicated machinery, and good people feel easy about the heathen. I find no fault with what is done, but my fault is that we are not doing a hundred times as much in ways more spontaneous. If the church of God should once wake up, it will be as the sea when it returns to its strength after a long ebb. The Lord send it—send it now! But He will only bless the world in His own way, and one of His conditions is that the whole church should move. We must come back to the primitive custom; every Christian must be a herald of the cross.

II. Secondly, having asked you to notice the universality of the work, will you please to notice THE NATURALNESS OF IT. That word “therefore,” at the commencement of the fourth verse, says a great deal to me. “Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word”—as if it followed as a sort of natural consequence, that being scattered they went everywhere preaching the word. Does not this show us that *they could not think of following any other course*? They that were scattered might have said, “Clearly our duty is to hold our tongues; we have got into great trouble at Jerusalem because we preached Christ. We must now look to our own safety, and the comfort of our families, and in these foreign countries we had better live godly lives, and go to heaven on the sly, but we need not again expose ourselves to the dangers of persecution.” They did not thus argue. It is not said, “Therefore they that were scattered abroad slunk away, and held their tongues.” No, they never thought of that.

We do not find that they even said, "This gospel of ours is evidently not in accord with the spirit of the age. The scribes and Pharisees all differ from us, and we must endeavor to win them by altering our tone." They did not dream of cutting off the angles of truth, nor of inserting pleasant fragments of popular thought to please the powers that be, but they set forth "the word" in its pure simplicity, and the cross of Christ, which is an offense to so many. They never said, "The old gospel did very well when Jesus was here, but you see He has gone, and circumstances alter cases, and alter gospels, and we had better adapt our teaching to the period." They did not so, because of the fear of the Lord. They did not endeavor to mend the gospel, but they went everywhere proclaiming it. They preached the word as they received it; they set forth the kingdom as their King had revealed it. Ah, dear friends! If you are true to the Lord Jesus Christ you have to spread the gospel somehow, and it must be the old, old gospel. You must not dare to think of denying the light to those around you. Would you leave men to perish for lack of knowledge? Dare you have their blood on your garments?

These persecuted ones "went everywhere preaching the word." Why was it so natural to them to do it? *Their obligations pressed upon them.* They each one of them said, "I have been saved, and I must see others saved. I am bound to tell of the blood of Jesus, and its power to wash away sin. The curses of the ages will fall upon me, and the wails of lost souls will come up into my ears as long as I exist, if I do not make known the gospel." Brethren, God's way of saving the unconverted is through His church, and if the church neglects its work, who is to do it? Our Lord means to bring in the rest of His chosen through those who are already called, but if these start aside and are untrue to their calling, how is the work to be done? I know the work is of God alone; still He uses instruments. If you do not tell the gospel, you are leaving your fellow men to perish. Yonder is the wreck, and you are not sending out a life-boat! Yonder are souls starving, and you give them no bread! Well, if you are resolved to be thus inhuman, at least know what you are doing. You that are taking no share in this great work of spreading the gospel are willfully allowing men to go down to hell, and their blood will be required at your hands. These first believers dared not incur such guilt, and therefore away they went preaching the word.

I think, too, that *their wonderment compelled them.* They had seen the man Christ Jesus, and they had communed with Him. They had beheld His Godhead in His miracles, and they had adored. They had seen Him nailed to the cross; they had, many of them, beheld Him alive after He was risen from the dead, and they could not help telling out so great a marvel. Here was God come down among men. Here was the Redeemer of men suffering to the death to rescue men from eternal ruin, and they could not help telling abroad this miracle of love. They were like children, who, when they hear a bit of startling news, must tell it. Good men that they were, their wonderment and their joy were equal, and they could not hold their peace. When ancient believers were shut up in prison, they began to sing the gospel until the prisoners heard them. They had something to sing about, and they must sing it. If they took them out of the temple by force, behold, the moment the prison doors were opened, they were found standing in the same place telling the same story. If you and I felt that blessed amazement which we ought to feel when we think of free grace and dying love, silence would be impossible.

The principal reason for their constant proclamation of Jesus was that *they were in a fine state of spiritual health.* They went everywhere preaching the word when scattered abroad, because they had proclaimed it when at home. You will never make a missionary of the person who does no good at home. If you do not seek souls in your own street, you will not do so in Hindustan. If you are of no use in Whitechapel, you will be of no use in the Congo. He that will not serve the Lord in the Sunday school at home will not win children to Christ in China. Distance lends no real enchantment to Christian service. You who do nothing now, are not fit for the war, for you are in sad health. The Lord give you spiritual health and vigor, and then you will want no pressing, but you will cry at once, "Here am I, send me!" O my friends, go at once to your families, to your workshops, and declare the name of Jesus! Oh, for more spiritual life! This is the root of the matter. If we were living more fully in the power of the Holy Spirit, our witness would be borne without constraint; it would be as natural to us to spread the gospel as to breathe. We should be under holy impulses which would demand our witness-bearing, for if we could not speak the word of the Lord, it would be as fire in our bones; we should become weary with withholding. Lord, give us this spiritual life more and more!

Surely also *the times must have urged them onward*, to go with hurried step as messengers for Christ, for Jerusalem was soon to be destroyed. This made them quick in their movements that the last warning might come to all their countrymen. You know what the times are now! I am no prophet, but as we read, week by week, the appalling crimes that are chronicled by the press, if ever Christian men should be in earnest they should be in earnest now. All the signs of the times arouse us to look for the coming of our Lord. No token tends to quiet us, but all to awaken us. We must work at double quick rate, and if anyone among us has done nothing at all, it is time for him, as a good servant, to gird up his loins, to work and to watch, “for in such an hour as he thinks not the Son of man comes.” I have been praying all the while that I have been speaking this morning; yes, praying more than preaching, that God may distinctly lay His hand on every brother and sister in this place, and constrain you to proclaim this gospel of Jesus in every place to which you can go.

III. Thirdly, carefully notice THE JOYFULNESS OF THIS WORK. “They were scattered abroad,” but as “they went everywhere preaching the word,” the calamity became a blessing. Their work took the sting out of their banishment. The housewife had to leave her comfortable little home, and tramp to a strange country; the man of business had to sell his stock, and quit his position. Those were hard times beyond question. Fancy that happening to us! What distress would spread over this congregation if you had to run for your lives! But then they said to themselves, “It is all right, for as we live to spread abroad the knowledge of Jesus, we shall do this wherever we go. Our flight shall be a mission.” This changed the aspect of affairs. By the persecution they received express marching orders to quit home and take to foreign service. Was not this a comfort? For myself, I always like to know the Lord’s will clearly. Suspense kills me. If I have any question about what my course should be, I am worried more than I can tell. Even distress is a relief when it shuts you up to one course. Persecution became both a direction as to their course and an occasion for getting to work. As they must go elsewhere, they would talk of salvation by faith in Jesus to the people among whom they might be called to sojourn, and so tell the story of redemption to people who were totally ignorant of it. This made them feel it was a good thing after all that they were scattered abroad. Dear friends, if your heart is set on a purpose, and there comes a crash which spoils your comfort, you hardly lament it if it promotes your chief design in life. If you are possessed with the idea that you, as a Christian, must live only to serve Christ, and to win souls, then anything which happens, however painful, will be welcomed if it places you in a better position for your holy life work. That is the place in which you can serve the Lord better. So that the tried people of God at Jerusalem must have felt devoutly comforted as they saw that God was helping them to answer the great purpose of their lives, and was pushing them forward by pushing them out.

Their exile would be a help in gaining attention, for when they came to a place, the people would inquire, “Why are these Jews coming here?” And the answer would be that they had been forced from home because they believed in one Jesus, who was called Christ, who had died for men, so that by faith in Him they might be saved. For love of this Savior they had been driven from their native land. The people may not have thought them wise, but doubtless they would be interested in their story, and thus made aware of their faith. Curiosity would ask of yonder Jewess, “How came you to be here, Naomi?” And Naomi would tell the story of the crucified Savior. “And you, Benjamin, what drove you from Palestine?” He, too, would have to narrate the life and death of the Nazarene, and so Jesus would be made known. Persecution thus opened men’s minds to inquire and served the purpose of advertising the gospel. Thus the Lord set up pulpits for His servants wherever they went, and provided congregations for them. What Satan intended for evil the Lord turned for good. What better could have happened than for all these holy men and women to be driven abroad to disseminate the ever blessed word? This, as they thought of it, made them bear their exile without repining. An all-absorbing purpose turned sorrow into joy. I cannot conceive of anything so calculated to reconcile them to their banishment as the prospect of glorifying God the more. The martyr spirit is just the spirit of witness-bearing overcoming all love of self and even care for life.

Moreover, as they told the story, and it made their own hearts glow with holy fire, their spirits were refreshed, and their souls made glad. Jesus seemed still to be near them; yes, He was with them. They found the surest remedy for their grief in His sacred fellowship; no, the grief itself became gladness. If you want to get rid of low spirits, preach the gospel. To take Christ’s yoke is to find rest unto your souls.

If you are in the very dust, go and tell a weary one of salvation by Jesus; you will thus raise yourself, even if your message is rejected. Here is a balm, which, while it heals the wound to which it is applied, also perfumes the hand which applies it. The exiles were made to feel at home when they saw God working with them in Greece and Rome, even as He had done in Jerusalem.

I may add that, if they were led to see that they were now made like their Lord in suffering, they would have comfort in that fact. If they now remembered what He said concerning the grain of wheat, which must be cast into the ground and die, or it could not bring forth fruit, they would now feel that they were having fellowship with Him in His sufferings. This was enough to make them a happy body of men and women. They were scattered, but not saddened. Theirs was not the scattering of a retreat, but of an advance all along the line, and so it yielded them joy, and not distress. I entreat you, try active service as a solace for sorrow.

IV. Notice, fourthly, THE SUPREMACY OF THIS WORK. "They that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word." I suppose they did something for a living. I do not know what their handicrafts might be, but each one had a calling, and followed it industriously. We are not told what they did. It is incidentally mentioned, further on in history, that the apostle Paul made tents, but you never read anywhere in the Bible that Paul went everywhere tent making. He did make tents, but that was not his vocation; his business was to save souls. He made tents, in order that he might not be indebted to the people, but winning souls was Paul's business. The scattered did not go abroad for the purpose of trade. They did not say, "We will go to such a place, because there we can make the best profits," but they chose their way with the one purpose of spreading the gospel. To preach Christ was their one vocation which, like Aaron's rod, swallowed up all other rods. Proclaiming Christ was their one purpose, passion, and profession; all else might go. I wonder how many Christian people here could have their biographies condensed into this line, "He lived to make Christ known." Might it not be said of one, he lived to open a shop, and then to open a second? Or of another, he lived to save a good deal of money, and take shares in limited liability companies? Or of a third, he lived to paint a great picture? Or of a fourth, he was best known for his genial hospitality? Of many a minister it might be said—he lived to preach splendid sermons, and to gain credit for fine oratory. What of all these? If it can be said of a man, "He lived to glorify Christ," then his life is a life. Every Christian man ought so to live. Oh that my memorial might be, "He preached Christ crucified"! You fall short of your design in life if Jesus is not as much your object as He is your confidence. Make your tents, sell your goods, paint your pictures if you will, but do all this in order that you may fulfill your higher and truer life, for which you were bought with blood, and quickened by the Spirit of God.

We note the supremacy of this work, not only because it swallowed up all their trades, but because it *obliterated all trace of caste*. See Philip. He is a Jew, but he goes to Samaria. "Philip, what made you go to Samaria? Jews have no dealings with Samaritans." Brethren, when it comes to preaching Christ we have dealings with everybody—Jews, Turks, infidels, cannibals. The Jew goes to Samaria for Christ, and the Samaritans accept the Messiah of the Jews. Soon Philip is called down south to journey along a desert way, and there he meets an Ethiopian, probably a black man. Ah well! White men were not particularly anxious for the company of Ethiopians, but Philip gets up into his chariot, and rides with him. Black and white makes a fine mixture when the book of the prophet Isaiah lies between them. What a beautiful picture this would make! Philip and the eunuch riding together reading of the Lord Jesus in the Hebrew prophets. All the paltry differences of sect, politics, nationalities and races go to the winds as soon as we are possessed with a desire to win souls. "Oh but the poor are so dirty!" Let us show them how they can be cleansed. "But the slum is so foul!" Yet for the love of Jesus we will enter it to carry His saving health among the people.

What is more, we shall not only be willing to work for the poor and fallen, but we shall *work with them*. You, a person of taste and culture, will join hands with the illiterate worker, and while you are half amused at his blunders, you will be charmed by his zeal. You will not despise him, but you may even feel humbled as you see how, with less knowledge than yourself, he often shows more spiritual wisdom and energy. You will take a brotherly pride in such a man. Caste is gone when Christ is come. Oh, that we might feel the supremacy of our holy service more and more! Christ must be made known; sinners

must be saved; heaven must be filled, and before these necessities everything else must be as nothing. Are you not of this mind?

See, also, the supremacy of their purpose, in the fact that *they were willing to be at the beck and call of the Holy Spirit*, and to go anywhere. Philip was getting on splendidly at Samaria, and the church grew under his care. Surely he ought to stop there; he is evidently the man for the place! But he does not stop there. Philip has a call, not to a larger church, but to the road through the desert, and away he goes to talk to one person. The genuine soul-winner has his inward directions, and he follows the guidance of the Spirit of God. Here, there, anywhere, everywhere he goes, where the hope of conversions tempts him. When a sportsman goes out after game, he does not know which way he will go; neither does he bind himself in that matter. If he is stalking deer, he may have to go up the mountain side, or down the glen, across the burn, or away among the heather. Where his sport leads him, he follows, and so it is with the genuine soul-winner; he leaves himself free to follow his one object. He does not know where he is going, but he does know what he is going after. He lays himself out for the winning of souls for Jesus. On the railway he speaks to anyone who happens to be put in the same carriage; or in the shop he looks out for opportunities to impress a customer. He sows beside all waters, and in all soils. He carries his gun at half-cock, ready to take aim at once. That is the man whom God is likely to bless.

Note yet one thing more; the supremacy of this work was seen in the fact that these good people *were quite willing to subside*. Philip has done a great work at Samaria, but he sends for the apostles Peter and John to come down from Jerusalem. Some few earnest workers have been impatient of discipline, but the best of them are the most orderly people in the world. Some brethren are just as ready to obey church authority as if they were the least of all saints, instead of being the most successful of the brotherhood. It is not well when our Philips are too big to work in connection with the mother-church. I have never found them so. The idle are troublesome; the laborious are loving. Philip turns into nobody just as readily as before he had been everybody. Peter and John come upon the scene, and seem, as it were, to run away with his laurels, but Philip makes no complaint, for in fact there were no laurels for any of them; all the glory was given to Jesus. Whether it were Philip, or Peter, or John, the Lord alone was magnified. Blessed is that man who knows how to subside. Oh, that there were thousands of workers of this kind willing to come to the front, and lead the way, and just as willing to step aside, if thereby the cause might advance!

V. Thus have I brought this matter before you, and I shall now beg you to observe THE SPECIALTY OF THIS WORK. I have shown you its universality, its naturalness, its joyfulness, and its supremacy, and now we will dwell upon its specialty. Philip is set before us as a specimen of those who were scattered abroad. A sample shows the whole. What did Philip make prominent? "Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached *Christ* unto them." That is all he had to preach, he preached the Messiah, the Anointed One, the Christ. But when Philip had to instruct an educated nobleman, did he dwell on the same subject as that which he brought before common Samaritans? Read the thirty-fifth verse. "Then Philip opened his mouth and began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him *Jesus*." Here we have the same subject as before; to the Samaritans Christ, to the Ethiopian Jesus. See, then, what we have to do. We have to tell over and over again what we know so well, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. The Savior lived here a life of holy obedience, and then died, "the just for the unjust, to bring us to God." We preach that this Jesus made atonement for sin, so that whosoever believes in Him has eternal life, and shall never come into condemnation. We declare that Jesus rose again, and that this new life He bestows on those who trust Him; that He has gone into heaven to take possession of the inheritance for His people, and to plead for them before the throne, and that those who are in Him shall one day be with Him and behold His glory. In a word, we preach Jesus as the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world.

This is the old, old story. It is a very simple story, but the telling of it will save people. Keep to that gospel. Many have lost faith in it. It is hoped that people will now be saved by new socialistic arrangements, by moral precepts, by amusements, by societies, and what not. Let the church of God be glad when anything is done which helps temperance, purity, freedom, and so forth, but *her* one business is to preach Christ. Stick to this, my brethren. If all the shoemakers in London were to take to making bracelets for the Queen, she would be badly decorated, but where should we be? Let the cobblers stick to their

lasts. You that are sent to preach Christ, if you take to doing something else, and become philosophical, socialistic, philanthropic and all that, what is to become of the spiritual nature of men? Keep to your work. Go and preach Christ to the people. I have not lost faith in the old gospel. No; my confidence in it grows as I see the speedy failure of all the quackeries of succeeding years. The methods of the modern school are a bottle of smoke. Christ crucified is the only remedy for sin. Keep to the gospel of “believe and live.” “Whosoever believes in the Lord Jesus Christ has everlasting life.” If this gospel does not uplift the race, nothing will. This is the only medicine which the great Physician has given to us to administer to sin-sick souls. Keep to it. “There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” We want no advance, we dream of no improvement upon the gospel.

In closing, I would call your attention to two little words in the fifth verse. “Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ,” allow me to put the next two words in capitals—“UNTO THEM.” Read the thirty-fifth verse. “Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same Scripture, and preached UNTO HIM Jesus.” Somebody said to Mr. Moody—“How are we to get at the masses?” He replied, “Go for them.” The expression is forcible, “Go for them.” Go for them in the name of Christ. Go right at them. Do not only preach Christ, but preach Christ *unto them*. Preach Jesus to the individual man. It is the work of the church of God, as much as lies in us, to bring Christ home to the people’s knowledge, thought, belief, conscience, and heart. Preach it *unto them*. If I stand here and preach *before* you, what is the good of it? But if I preach *unto* you, there is practical use in it. When you go out of this place, I pray you to look out your man or your woman, and speak unto him, or unto her Jesus the Christ. Come to close dealings. I fear that some of you fathers have not yet prayed with your boys, and some of you mothers have not yet taken your girls apart, and talked with them about eternal things. Have you? You say, “I am so retiring.” Then retire, and pray, but love your children enough to speak to them of Jesus. You sisters, have you spoken to your brothers about Jesus? Have some of you wives yet spoken to your ungodly husbands about the Christ? This is the point. If we will each one speak for our Lord, we shall see results that will perfectly astound us. If, during the next few months, this church would fully wake up, and if every member would feel, “I have something to do, and I must do it,” we should then see a glorious harvest. When my brethren Fullerton and Smith hold special services in this place, as they will do in the beginning of November, you will help to get in the people, and to crowd the place, and when they preach, you will pray and watch, and look up the inquirers, and we shall have great times. If you will go after people at their houses, and give them your own personal testimony in loving earnestness, the Holy Spirit will bless you. Oh, may God arouse us to this! I say again, I have not preached this morning half so much as I have prayed. For every word that I have spoken I have prayed two words silently to God. Oh, that the Lord would hear me, and bless us in an unusual degree! If the Lord will fill you with His Spirit, the opening of yonder front doors and your going out will be like the bursting of a bomb-shell in London. If you are all in earnest, your existence will be like the shining of the sun in the heavens. Oh, how I long that God may be glorified! For His truth’s sake I have been “abundantly filled with reproach,” but I would gladly accept a sevenfold baptism of it so that his kingdom would come. May the Lord make bare His holy arm in the eyes of all the people! Amen and Amen.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—ACTS 8.

HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”—100 (VERSION 2), 484, 331.

Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software.

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